"SHREK"

~ outline & notes ~

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7 00 P 9/20/96 LAWRENCE & SOMMERS

PROLOGUE: DIFFICULT BIRTH

1. THE WORKS

Evening. A tall tapered building of rough lumber and quarried stone draws mechanical advantage from a mountain waterfall. It is a mill of some kind.

A heavy cascade roars influence over the architectural parasite's multiple wheels of creaking timber and iron. The borrowed circular motion drives a system of large levered buckets that dig in the host mountain under the compulsion of medieval belt-driven machinery.

Bucket-shaped piles of dirt and stones pass on stitched leather conveyors into the base of the peculiar hydraulic tower.

A storm of thunder and lightning gathers in distant hills.

Inside THE WORKS each conveyored dirt-pile is sprayed with water, blasted with steam and passed through a furnace. Giant bellows piped with brass and copper pressurize many of the mechanical functions.

Each stage of the process reduces the size of a dirt-pile and produces waste in the form of a gloppy brown sludge that falls into a grated floor sluice where it is channeled to a covered chute in the wall.

Every sixth or seventh pile produces a small yellow nugget that continues alone on the belt to a stamping machine that produces a single shiny gold coin. Most of the dirt-piles contain none of the yellow rock.

A worker of rank (COIN-BEARER) takes the single coin and limps with it towards the stairs. The lame employee holds the coin high and fearfully passes beneath wood carven gargoyles with glowing eyes that follow his every move.

High in the tower is a thick oaken door that bears the emblem of the ROYAL MAGE. A single armored goon stands a sloppy guard.

2. THE ROYAL MAGE (Alan Rickman) ~ Song: *"IT'S IN THE STARS"*

Behind the door, an enormously fat man in robes of scarlet and purple sits behind an

alchemically cluttered table and weighs shiny new coins in a precision scale. Over-weight excess is shaved with a fine blade into a glass vial. He licks a little of the gold dust from a finger and raises a brow in approval of its quality.

The several coins are swept from the table (along with the stoppered glass vial of dust) into a velvet drawstring poke and fastened to the ROYAL MAGE's braided waist cinch.

ROYAL MAGE exits and locks up his office with a large key suspended with some others from a chain around his neck. (NOTE: This locked room will later also contain the APPRENTICE). He flips each guard a coin and heads downstairs while his enormous waddling bulk drags both sides of the passage. Red flickering light from the work room below cast immense upward shadows.

GUARD FOLLOWS R.M. DOWN STAIRS GETS RUNOVER COIN "GET TANG BOSS

ROYAL MAGE meets the limping coin-bearer on the stairs bringing up the latest issue. R.M. takes the coin from the fearful man and boots the fellow back down the stairs.

ROYAL MAGE continues down the winding stair and sings lightly (in spite of his great bouncing bulk) while flipping the newest coin in the air.

R.M. passes the occasional tower window and notes the partial positions of stars in a darkening sky ever covered with the billowing clouds of a great storm. He steps easily over the COIN-BEARER's bent and moaning form but misses a coin toss and the shiny little disk bounces down the last few steps into the work room.

"Stop it!" The ROYAL MAGE cries and reaches but the elusive issue clinks and twirls in an eccentric fashion past all grasping grimy hands to lodge in the teeth of two great meshing gears that nearly fill the inner mechanism of the refinery. The building shudders while the coin is worked through the slowed but un-stopped machine.

3. ALTERED EARTH

Outside THE WORKS, blobs of smelly, dark gloppy process-sludge are evacuated through covered chutes into a corroded copper system of troughs and flumes. The nasty, hissing waste is directed by workers with copper paddles into lead-lined storage barrels.

When the accident occurs, flume trestle supports buckle while noxious waste rains in a hissing sheet to the ground. Pre-cut shoring timbers are grabbed and pounded and shimmed hastily into place. The much-patched flumes have been breached before.

The SPILL flows like dark mercury across the uneven ground and slinks like a black bubbling serpent into the river where it becomes a spreading cloud.

The lead-lined storage barrels are carted to a dug-out hole in the ground near the river and dumped with hundreds of others. The impact of the new containers cracks the seals of the old containers and a black oily residue leaks into the ground.

MAGIC COMES W/ IT'S OWN PICTURES

AFTER PASSING THRU MOTHER, COMES LIKE SLACK

4. WATER AND MIRRORS

The poisonous cloud moves downstream.

A castle of stone, walled and with several modest towers, stands among rolling grass-covered hills. Across the river to the south lies a rough and uneven cottage nestled in the eaves of a great dark forest.

Much further downstream a town of docks and boats can be seen built in a bend of the South shore around a natural vertical stone formation.

Thunder rumbles closer.

The slow movement of the poison through the water parallels actions on both shores.

From the castle, a COURT PAGE carries a golden ewer to the river for fresh water.

From the cottage, a very pregnant WOODCUTTER's WIFE waddles with a ladle for the same reason. The sound of chopping is heard. Rain begins to fall. Thunder and lightning much nearer. Chopping stops.

The poison cloud continues past the castle and cottage, expanding and diluting in strength as it moves towards the distant river community.

5. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN ~ Song: *"IT'S IN THE STARS" (Reprise)*

The storm is now a raging dangerous gale. Thunderous lightning dances across the rain-pounded landscape.

Inside the thick stone walls of the royal keep the severe weather is naught but a rumor.

Across the river, howling winds tear bits of thatch from the cottage roof. Rain is getting in.

At the castle banquet, a very pregnant QUEEN's delicate jeweled white hand suddenly stiffens and a golden goblet of water splashes clattering to the stone floor. Bearded men in dark purple robes rush to her side.

In the cottage, a dented copper ladle of water drops suddenly from the calloused clutching hand of the WOODCUTTER's WIFE. Her husband attends her. There is a flash of lightning and a different, feral-looking woman appears in the door of the cottage.

"It is the time." She says.

MIDWIFE/WITCH enters past the grateful WOODCUTTER.

Inside the castle, the QUEEN breathes hard while attended by dark-robed physicians. The room is draped with narrative tapestries and in a corner a small court chorale of young girls sings a madrigal. There are many candles set everywhere against great mirrors to reflect brighter light for the mumbling doctors.

The QUEEN screams in pain. The young singers falter. "Keep singing." The KING orders. The singers continue with tears in their eyes. The KING leaves the room, no longer able to stand the sight of his royal wife's great suffering.

Inside the WOODCUTTER's cottage the action is silhouetted in fire light and reflected in a single dusty mirror. The MIDWIFE/WITCH works alone over the painful labor of the grimy, sweating peasant woman. WOODCUTTER is on knees gripping her hands in his. The WOODCUTTER's WIFE screams and the mirror cracks as she stiffens and falls limp.

Outside the QUEEN's room, one of the attending physicians approaches the KING.

"Well?" The KING asks.
"A ... girl, sire." The DOCTOR seemed unsure.
"And her mother?"
"In heaven, sire."

The KING hangs his head in his hands and his crown falls to the flagging at the top of a broad stone stairway. The royal circlet clatters to the hall below where it slowly rings to a metallic stop beneath double rows of thousand-candle chandeliers swinging in a slow circle. The courtiers remain silent.

The WOODCUTTER's eyes distend in horror when he beholds his child and stumbles from his unmoving wife outside into the storm amid the baby boy's cries of *"SHREK! SHREK!"*

(SUPER TITLE IN BOLT OF LIGHTING WITH BOOMING 'THX' THUNDER: **"SHREK"**)

The WITCH swaddles the strange babe and carries it away into the peak of the night storm. She sings a mumbled cryptique like a lullaby in a manner that quiets the baby SHREK.

"Go-old and digging, mo-oney and pigging - fruiting fro-om the loin.
Ro-olling and guessing, no-othing is pressing; 'ware the o-other side o' the coin."

The WOODCUTTER's body dangles by the neck from a rope revealed in a lightning flash, swinging in a dead-weight circle from a porch post angle. His expression is the same as when he first laid eyes on his son.

Lighting strikes the cottage and it burns to the ground.

(NOTE: Morph-edit perspectives and faces between dual births rather than hard-edit.)

6. TITLES/PASSAGE OF TIME MONTAGE

Royal Guards conduct carts through the town collecting all mirrors by authority of Royal Edict, careful to avoid the bad luck of breakage.

Follow fate of the gold coin (given by ROYAL MAGE as payment to his tower guard) over a period of sixteen years. The gold disk (known as a 'Gold Mage' or 'Mage') makes it way to the RIVER TOWN and there changes hands many times among the shops of the MERCHANT's CIRCLE established around the great standing stone.

The coin is cast down by different hands (gloved man's, gloved woman's, child's, rough, fine, dirty, clean, etc.) with other coins on various surfaces (wood, marble, clay, slate, stone, glass, etc.) and in various financial combinations. Symbols stamped on other coins represent characters in the story. Some coins spin, some coins stack, some roll off the edge, etc. The original gold piece becomes smoother and smoother, smaller and smaller and dirtier and dirtier until it resembles a near-worthless copper token.

ACT I

~ Many years later ~

7. THE MINSTREL ~ Song: *"THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN"*

The RIVER TOWN prepares for the birthday of the PRINCESS. Flowers, bunting, food and good cheer are everywhere. Travelling performers are present for the annual festivities.

The tarnished and reduced gold coin is found between muddy cobbles in the street by a smudgy barefoot LITTLE URCHIN.

"Hey!" An older boy with a gang points. "That's mine!"

LITTLE URCHIN slips coin unseen to a ragged MINSTREL (Paul Simon/Jethro Tull) tuning a lute in the town circle.

"Hold this for me!" LITTLE URCHIN whispers and runs.

LITTLE URCHIN is chased off by group of older boys. They have shoes and he doesn't but he is faster and more clever.

MINSTREL recognizes immediately the hidden gold and polishes it to luster on his sleeve and begins his song.

Something's coming (flips coin) *... and now it's here.*

MINSTREL deftly thumb-flips coin into a pocket and strolls away plucking his tune. He has two musical associates: a round, fat squeeze-box player and a tall, thin tumbling tambourine-and-bells man. They make reference to 'something' that has achieved too great a bulk, insatiable. They nod their heads upstream.

THE WORKS is an enormous operation now. The size of the irregular 'bite' removed from the mountain by the slow moving, primitive mining apparatus is much larger than before and riddled with supplementary shafts. It looks as though some great worm has been at work.

8. THE APPRENTICE MAGE ~ Song: *"ALL I WANT TO DO IS FLY"*

Inside the Old Tower office of the ROYAL MAGE a young APPRENTICE MAGE works alone drafting plans for more extensions to THE WORKS. The plans are staggering in their complexity. He finishes a line and blows some powder across it.

While the new ink dries, the APPRENTICE MAGE removes a personal project from a rough box: a small, delicate MODEL of a flying machine built like a bird, with wings of soldered brass and thinly shaved leather and with movable parts of polished hardwood. *(NOTE: reference da Vinci and the Gossamer Condor and Gossamer Albatross work of MacCready.)*

APPRENTICE MAGE looks at water clock on wall, stretches and yawns. He arches his sore back and waits to hear the satisfying, re-aligning crack there.

"Ah! Lunch-time, Anaximander!"

A tiny mouse with large shiny black eyes appears from around a cracked empty tea cup. Clay pots of quills, brushes and water are also there. The APPRENTICE MAGE swirls his brush in potted water and the loosened and diluted lamp-black swirls a dark vortex around it.

APPRENTICE MAGE shares his meager repast with ANAXIMANDER.

APPRENTICE MAGE explains avian concepts of lift and propulsion to the tiny animal while they eat. ANAXIMANDER appears to get the basic idea as the MODEL's clever working parts are demonstrated in illustration of the idealistic young man's theories. There is a clear obsession with flight.

The door behind them bursts open and the ROYAL MAGE storms in. Sparks, smoke and cinders backlight his explosive entrance. Items on shelves and tables are jarred roughly out of position.

The APPRENTICE MAGE nearly drops his precious model but recovers it before it strikes the floor.

ANAXIMANDER is gone.

The ROYAL MAGE grabs up the still wet plans and smears the finely ruled ink.

"The work must begin tomorrow!" The R.M. informs brusquely. "The moon is perfect!"
"Tomorrow!? But, you said ..."
"Hush! And what is that toy doing here?" He nods at the model.
"It's a project of my own, sir! I work on it while the ink dries! Look!" He holds it up proudly. "It's a flying machine!"
"That!?" The ROYAL MAGE looks askance. "Hardly. Lift is achieved through the accumulation of vegetable gasses in a bird's internal bladders." The R.M. pounds his own heaving mass and produces an accidental burp. "Excuse me. Wings are for forward and reverse thrust only. How are you going to get it in the air? You've made no provision in your design."
"Oh." The APPRENTICE MAGE looks on his marvelous design with real doubt.
The R.M. continues.
"You have the pinions mounted at *far* to steep an angle, the proportions are *totally* incorrect and, and, ..." He has just noticed the wet ink on his hands and robes. "You're fired. Clear out."
"What?"
"By morning."

ROYAL MAGE exits, leaving door open because his hands are full of plans.

The APPRENTICE MAGE is left alone. A water clock on the wall is geared to the central building drive-shaft and foretells many things. It is orbital in arrangement and includes the known planets in a design of ever-moving relationships.

SHREK: Morning Star
PRINCESS: Evening Star
WITCH: Moon
APPRENTICE MAGE: Sun
KING: Sunset
ROYAL MAGE: Mercury

APPRENTICE MAGE decides his boss is right, that his MODEL is a useless waste of time. He holds his beautiful little idea in silent contemplation.

"Bladders." He shakes his head and sighs. "Of course. How could I have missed that?"

APPRENTICE MAGE packs his meager belongings in a sack and prepares to leave.

"Anaximander?"

A.M. calls for his little friend. Nothing. He scans the office-turned-store-room-turned apprentice's-garret but there is too much noise from downstairs to hear a rattling, overturned

teacup.

"Probably scared away. Oh, well. This tower is your home. I can't expect you to leave that. Goodbye, friend."

A.M. leaves the model as a present at the top of the drafting table very near the unnoticed struggling cup.

APPRENTICE MAGE leaves and closes door behind him with a booming echo.

9. ANAXIMANDER

ANAXIMANDER finally frees himself from the overturned cup that had trapped him since the ROYAL MAGE's entrance by using a piece of broken brush shaft levered on a quill. He scurries over the table and climbs into the MODEL. He undoes the wheel brake and the model begins to coast down the shallow slope of the drafting table. *(ANAXIMANDER's "CATCHING UP THEME" heard first)*

ANAXIMANDER peddles furiously and the tiny craft drops off the edge of the table. He spins downward but catches a draft whistling under the closed door at floor level. ANAXIMANDER pulls up.

ANAXIMANDER spirals towards a skylight open in the roof and nearly misses everything in the room on his way up. Once out, the pedal chain slips and he stalls.

ANAXIMANDER plummets in a helical spin down the outside of the Old Tower towards the ground where the ROYAL MAGE is just exiting the building with an armload of plans. The little mouse pedals furiously. The chain catches again and he leans into the task.

Inside THE WORKS, the APPRENTICE MAGE is walking slowly down the winding tower stair. He hears a peculiar noise but turns too late to see his MODEL plummet-gliding past the window behind him. While turned away, the MODEL plummet-glides past the window he had earlier been approaching and he misses it altogether.

Just before impact, the MODEL's internal flywheel reaches a sustaining speed and the wings grab air. ANAXIMANDER pulls up.

ANAXIMANDER bounces off the ROYAL MAGE's head, knocking him into a muddy puddle of refinery leakage. He stands in spluttering fury and looks after the flying model while it bounces across treetops towards the castle. R.M.'s clothes slowly disintegrate and fall from his body.

ANAXIMANDER and MODEL ascend in a slow spiral around the castle's tallest tower.

10. THE PRINCESS ~ Song: *"MY LOVE IS A TOWER TO THE SKY"*

The tall central tower is covered in thick ivy and spires up from the midst of the castle. It is a relatively new addition, no older than sixteen years.

Motionless on horseback, a GREAT KNIGHT guards the portcullis of the only entrance.

This is where long ago the KING hid away his daughter and his shame. Deep in his royal bosom he knows the PRINCESS' appearance is *somehow* his fault. He visits often. His love is as strong as his guilt and the private moments with his daughter are genuine and touching.

ANAXIMANDER buzzes by the tower's highest parapet window where a small balcony is mostly shaded by a lattice work of criss-crossed stone overgrown with a flowering vine. Several birds leave perches there to chase after the flying mouse.

"What was that?" A melodious young female voice asks from inside the high tower window.

A much older KING leans out through the hanging foliage to observe the fading flying phenomenon.

"It would appear to be some form of large flying insect. Curious." He ducks back inside. "I must consult the Royal Mage for some spray. You are vulnerable up here, my dear."

A conversation that has been interrupted continues. The cloistered PRINCESS senses she is 'different' in some peculiar way but is completely ignorant of mirrors and of what other girl's and women look like.

"Am I much like mother?" She asks.
"Not in all things."
"But many things? Father?" She presses.
"Yes." He smiles with a tear. "Many things."
Pause.
"I have heard you say mother was very beautiful." Silence. "Am I beautiful?"
Pause.
"You are more than beautiful. You are special."
"I am nearly a woman, father." She states a fact. Silence. "Shall I be married?"
"Only a great Prince would be worthy." Pause. "And they are scarce in these days."
"How will I know him?" She presses.
"He will be different from all others."
"Special?"
"You mock me, but come, the town prepares for your birthday. What would you have this year?"
"A wedding." Arms were folded.
"In some things you *excel* your mother." The KING sighs. "I'm sorry, my dear, but I

must return to the court. Think on a more ... practical gift."

After her father leaves her, the PRINCESS stands in the vine latticed shadows of the high parapet attended by birds whom she has befriended over the years of her royal confinement. She reaches a delicate gloved hand through the architectural and botanical weaving and the birds perch and look into her truly beautiful eyes through the stone and vines that hide her. The birds bring her news of far places in the way of scents and small tokens flown from afar.

She gives to her favorite (a great RAVEN who brings her the largest and loveliest things) the silken handkerchief she has lately dried her lonely tears with and tells the avian messenger to:

"Take this to my great Prince."

The bird flies away with the task and token and the PRINCESS watches from her prison.

11. MORE

KING meets with ROYAL MAGE in a high castle counting room. R.M. has replaced his corroded clothes with even finer regalia.

ROYAL MAGE counts out the week's minting: three coins.

"That's *all?*" The KING is incredulous and looks through a window over to the distant and extensive digging operation.
"It is an old mountain, Sire." The R.M. bows an excuse. "Perhaps if I increased production?"
The KING's features hardened.
"More 'hiring'?" The KING sarcasmed.
"More <u>opportunity</u>, Lord."
"Very well. Proceed."

R.M.'S 'CON'.
KING THANKS FOR SNOW JOB

ROYAL MAGE turns up his mountain-digging machine against warnings of FURNACE FOREMAN.

"She'll blow if I push 'er more, Sire!"
"Do it!" The ROYAL MAGE orders and the sound of the new steam-machines increases in pitch.

12. THE CLOUDS GATHER

The river tumbles in foaming rapid grades away from THE WORKS and the CASTLE to the valley floor and the subject town clustered along a bend on the South shore.

A summer storm can be heard and seen forming in the high misty range to the West.

The RIVER TOWN peasant community subsists on fishing, hunting and grain farming. There are numerous docks and some small boat traffic.

ANAXIMANDER barely keeps the MODEL above water in crossing the river and is chased by toothy jumping fish all the way.

The RAVEN perches on the great stone in the center of the town circle and looks briefly for a Prince there before flying on.

13. THE "*RÊK*"

Because of its size, shape and position, the great stone that stands at the center of the town has several tales and legends associated with it. Many of these are the subject of minstrel songs, puppet shows and troubadour events. Travelling performers would contain references in their repertories. Locally, it is known as the *Rêk.*

The ragged but joyful MINSTREL dances through the crowded MERCHANT's CIRCLE playing his peculiar, lute-like stringed instrument (a 'Lutar') that allows the simultaneous playing of complex harmonies with clever fingering. Sometimes a third hand is required from one of his skilled associates.

MINSTREL and his two associates are a Greek Chorus who will occasionally break frame to lyricize prophesied events for the larger cinematic audience. Only the WITCH seems able to actually relate to them in either presence or conversation by way of rhymes.

The current song is a fairytale concerning the *Rêk* and a prophesied "Stone Hero" that masters it.

"There are two sides to every tale - two sides to every song,
Two ways to know just which way to go - and two ways to get it all wrong."

The MINSTRELS are followed by long squealing strings of the town's children. They are led to a temporary puppet stage in the shade of the great rock where a performance is about to begin.

"Inside and Outside are all sides in one -
and two sides apart are two sides undone."

"To look is to see, within or without -
mirrors and water create and kill doubt."

A legendary 'Coming' is foretold.

"The end of our play's the end of the tale -
and the end of the road for him whom we hail."

Two crude wooden puppets appear on the small stage. A large hooded figure with a great staff walks with a witch figure. The children clap and squeal.

"Stone Hero! Stone Hero!" they cry.

Song content: flight, soaring, falling, up/down, high/low, ascend/descend, royal/common, birds, things flying,

14. ANAXIMANDER & THE RAVEN

ANAXIMANDER has found an updraught to rest and catch his breath in. A shadow covers him and he is suddenly eye-to-eye with the PRINCESS' hungry RAVEN.

A larger shadow engulfs them both and a fierce HAWK swoops out of the sun at them.

FLYING CHASE begins: ANAXIMANDER, RAVEN and HAWK.

A light rain falls.

15. SHREK

Some miles from the town, two characters exit a dim forest trail onto the main river road.

A huge person dressed in a peasant tunic walks with a staff that is a small tree and with a cowl hooding his features. An old woman hangs on his arm. She has been speaking the MINSTRELS' rhyme to her large travelling companion and continues.

"The world be hard and roads be long and ye shall have a place in song.
More than most, as ye shall see, choose, young SHREK, the way ye'd be."

WITCH and forest trail vanish behind the huge hooded figure. He turns to see there is no way back. Curious forest animals have been following and watching and are still nearby. The strange person throws back his hood to survey the problem. It is, of course, a youthfully vigorous SHREK (Arnold Schwarzzenegger).

"V'HAT ABOUT DINNER!" He bellows to the closed forest.

Animals see his face and react with wide-eyed horror and scamper hurriedly away.

SHREK's echo fades unanswered and he turns to the river road again. It stretches endlessly in both long and lonely-looking directions.

"I'm hungry." He grumbles and rubs the great void of his stomach.

A strange buzzing sound in the air gets his attention and he observes the aerial approach of the

dripping wet MODEL (piloted by ANAXIMANDER), followed by the RAVEN (with a cloth in its mouth), followed by the great pursuing HAWK.

The FLYING CHASE barrels at high speed towards SHREK.

"Dinner." SHREK grins and opens his huge-tusked and saliva-stringed maw.

ANAXIMANDER sees the horrible thing in the road and splits left. The RAVEN almost drops the cloth and splits right. The HAWK is too large to quickly change direction and (though trying mightily *not* to) flies deep into SHREK's open mouth. The mighty jaws shut.

CHOMP!

SHREK swallows and belches feathers.

"Ah!"

ANAXIMANDER and the RAVEN circle high overhead and split off in two directions away from each other.

SHREK catches a glimpse of a furiously peddling little mouse inside the strange glinting 'bird'.

ANAXIMANDER heads towards the town.

SHREK decides the flying mouse is more interesting than the RAVEN with the cloth and takes the road West towards town. *(NOTE: first refusal.)* He walks into a mild and warm summer rain.

"I'm still hungry." He pulls up his hood and grumbles to himself.

SHREK comes upon a PEASANT asleep under a cart piled with the hay of his morning's work.

A charred and spitted ham smokes over a small fire. Only a little has been carved away. There is a partial loaf of hard-bread and a dark stoppered bottle.

SHREK frightens away the PEASANT.

"This 'living-in-the-world' stuff is easy." He downs the ham (bone and all) in a single gulp. "Just take what you find." *(NOTE: Learns later that 'Find' and Need' are different in this song.)*

SHREK chews and wonders and chews and wonders and chews and burps while looking on the wide world around him. He has doubts. Where and what is his place here?

The rain becomes a thunder storm and SHREK perks up. He loves storms.

LITTLE URCHIN crests a hill unseen behind SHREK and dives into the hay cart to hide.

SHREK eats lightning. SHREK is always seeking to fill a great inner void. Even 'Fire from the sky' is only momentarily satisfying.

LITTLE URCHIN observes.

BULLIES who were chasing LITTLE URCHIN crest hill and run right into SHREK.

SHREK belches electricity, scorching surprised BULLIES.

BULLIES run back to town screaming in terror about a fire-breathing ogre.

LITTLE URCHIN observes all.

A yapping dog chases a buzzing ANAXIMANDER across distant B.G.

SHREK learns of proximity to town, the fact of a holiday.

"It's the PRINCESS' birthday." He is told.

SHREK looks to the distant castle and the high, ivied tower with bright colorful pennants flying from it. The distant vision is framed in a brief blue-sky break in the storm clouds.

"Hm. I've never seen a Princess. Maybe she will feed me. Show her to me."

Again, SHREK's hunger colors his vision and leads him on.

16. WHAT IS A PRINCE?

RAVEN is far afield. It observes various Princely young men who exhibit decidedly un-Princely behavior. RAVEN flies on with his silk token, ... looking, looking.

The RAVEN is seen flying across the background now and then with an ever more ragged silk handkerchief. ANAXIMANDER is similarly seen in his erratic quest for the APPRENTICE MAGE. Occasionally, the two searchers cross their flying paths. Gag time.

17. FULFILLMENT

SHREK and LITTLE URCHIN approach town where populace is bolted and shuttered indoors. TOWNSPEOPLE are hiding from the news of the frightened BULLIES' 'ogre' rumor.

Preparations for the PRINCESS' birthday lie abandoned everywhere.

A great wooden chair is set up in the shade of the *Rêk* as an absentee throne and is heaped with bountiful local offerings. There is much food and drink. SHREK and the LITTLE URCHIN help themselves.

"This is more like it." SHREK approves of the layout and pats his little companion on the head. "Good boy."

LITTLE URCHIN has never had access to so much food. SHREK is already a great hero to him. *(REVIEW: Harpo's ship-board banquet scene in A NIGHT AT THE OPERA.)*

The damage to their unprotected property finally get the TOWNSPEOPLE to show their faces.

LITTLE URCHIN takes the stage and excitedly tells them of SHREK's eating of the lightning.

"He ate the 'Fire from the sky'! He is the Stone Hero!"

TOWNSPEOPLE's suspicion and fear become mirth and ridicule. They reject the LITTLE URCHIN's 'ridiculous idea' out of hand and move in on the bottomless eating machine called SHREK.

TOWNSPEOPLE push forward an ELDER who approaches hat-in-hand with a request for proof.

"Do the lightning bit again." The ELDER asks politely.
"I must be struck first." SHREK answers and folds his mighty arms arrogantly.

WHAP!

"There's a strike for you!" An immense WASHER WOMAN swings her great tub paddle at him from behind. "Ha! I knew it! Freeloaders!" Swats SHREK again.

SHREK and LITTLE URCHIN turned out in song.

"GO AWAY!"

(sung by various TOWNSPEOPLE while shoving SHREK and LITTLE BOY around town circle.

You may be big! You may be strong!
You sure are ugly and you have to move along!

GO AWAY!

You come in here with tricks! You spoil our holiday!
You smell just like a stable so you have to go away!

GO AWAY!

You look like a tramp! You look like trouble!
You might eat all our children so *move* it! On the double!

GO AWAY! GO AWAY! GO AWAY!

SHREK blames and insults LITTLE URCHIN for nasty turn of events. L.U. deeply hurt by the insults from his hero. L.U. tearfully disappears into the crowd.

The ground rumbles. All fall silent and turn to look upstream.

There is an explosion at THE WORKS. Part of the badly eroded mountain collapses and a great black cloud rises in the air from it.

Unnoticed at first, the great standing stone, the *Rêk*, begins to topple. Deeply set in the ground, it's glacial fall is slow but inexorable. The shadow moves across roofs. Dogs bark. Cats hiss.

Once noticed, people run everywhere. Buildings in the way are hurriedly evacuated and unloaded. Many sick and bed-ridden are brought into the streets for the first time in many years. Children and animals are grabbed screaming from the spreading shadow until only one remains unmoved. A rock. A little human rock.

The LITTLE URCHIN stands in the birthday throne, defiant, a tear in his young eye.

"Save me." He commands SHREK and takes a bite from an apple.

"Save yourself." SHREK counters and backs away from the spreading shadow of responsibility, the shadow of the falling *Rêk*.

"You're the great 'Stone Hero'." The LITTLE URCHIN sasses a bit. "Save me. Or are you scared?"

SHREK and LITTLE URCHIN face off under the monumental catastrophe. The only way SHREK can do such a thing as the song foretells is if he *really* wants to.

Buildings are being crushed under the *Rêk*'s great weight but don't slow it's fall.

The LITTLE URCHIN stands calmly in the THRONE, his head just higher than its back, and eats the apple to a core while looking up and watching the geologic descent.

Finally, SHREK steps forward and plants his massive feet.

"Who's scared?"

SHREK raises his arms high and catches the great *Rêk* over his head and refuses to bend. He

grimaces mightily under the strain. The movement of the great stone slows and stops.

The *Rêk* flattens the LITTLE URCHIN's untamed mop of curly black hair but stops before touching his upturned forehead.

The *Rêk* is bested in a manner that coincides 'enough' with events in the 'Stone Hero' song to change a few minds. And then a few more. Hell, all this 'birthday' stuff is just lying around anyway, ... let's have a *party!* **Yeah!**

SHREK proclaimed hero.

18. Song: *"Am I Worthy?"*

The *Rêk*'s weight had driven SHREK hard into the ground past his knees - like a hammered nail.

SHREK's own staff is wedged in his place and SHREK steps away from the fallen stone amid thunderous cheers. A new staff of excellent workmanship is made for him on the spot.

Children play in the pair of deep holes made, trying to match their tiny feet with SHREK's great footprints.

Festival THRONE is empty. LITTLE URCHIN is gone. SHREK scans the jubilant faces in the crowd around him to no avail. His little friend is nowhere to be seen. He feels alone amid all the happy crowd. This makes him a little sad but he doesn't know why.

"Maybe he *is* the one!" Someone hollers.
"Maybe he *is!* Maybe he *is!*" It goes around the town.

SHREK is distracted from the strange new pain by his instant celebrity and thinks about the awesome responsibility that has come with his stepping forward to fulfill the prophecy of the 'Stone Hero'. *Is* he the one? He decides he is.

SHREK has an *absentee* duet with the distant en-towered PRINCESS while being ushered by a grateful TOWN THRONG through the MERCHANT's CIRCLE.

New pathways are already being fashioned on, around and under the fallen stone with the industry of ants re-building a trodden hill. Crunched architecture is cut out and re-built to fit around and over the RIVER TOWN's 'New' un-movable arrangement.

SHREK sings.

"Am I good enough?
Am I strong enough?
Am I big enough ... for this?"

"Am I good enough?
Am I right enough?
Am I the one ... for this?"

"Am I the one ... for you?" *(Sung together)*

"Am I worthy? Am I ready?
Am I sturdy? Am I steady?"

"Am I the one ... for you?" *(Sung together)*

The LITTLE URCHIN snaps his dirty fingers from atop a lamp post and breaks SHREK's pleasant reverie.

"Hero?!" He questions sarcastically.

All activity stops at the impertinence.

"He ate the lightning!" Someone asserts on faith.
"He fought the *Rêk!*" Someone else says.
"Ha!" The LITTLE URCHIN waves a pair of fingers at the prematurely celebrating crowd. "That's just *two* parts of the song!"
"*Oh, yeah.*" Crowd remembers.
"There's still the Dragon!" L.U. reminds.
"*That's right! 'Ray!*" The easily motivated crowd starts shouting and dancing again. "*The Dragon! The Dragon! 'Ray!*"
"Dragon?" SHREK asks a little crossly, hands on hips. "V'hat about my party? I'm the Stone Hero. Remember?"

Apparently there's something in the song about a big party at the happy end of things.

"Dragon first. Party later." LITTLE URCHIN descends from lamp post.

LITTLE URCHIN points to a rocky island splitting the river current a little ways off from town. A thin wisp of dark black smoke rises there.

"He lives over there. I'll take you. Come on. Hero."

SHREK points out another part of the song that says he must ride a mighty steed to the confrontation.

TOWN ELDERS furnish a donkey for his use. It's the only draught animal they have. SHREK and DONKEY don't get along.

"Some steed." SHREK snorts at the pathetic creature.

The DONKEY rolls a slow, red eye at SHREK, holds his gaze ... and spits a stream of tobacco juice across SHREK's tunic as if to answer back: "Some 'Hero'."

Crowd follows as far as the river's edge. The ground on the island appears to be scorched and smoking. There are numerous bleached bones.

"We'll wait here." An ELDER offers with a confident smile.

End Act I

ACT II

19. THE DRAGON ~ Song: *"Why Me?"* (Last-Beast-howling-at-the-moon-song)

On the Island of the Dragon, the APPRENTICE MAGE tends an iron cauldron of a bubbling herbal potion.

A DRAGON (John Cleese) huddles in an upright sitting posture under a blanket worn like a shawl. He sniffles over the potent fumes being mixed for his comfort.

The APPRENTICE MAGE has been sharing some of the DRAGON's cave space. There are rough drawings stuck up on the walls with resin that compare the wings of birds and dragons. Several rough partial models lie here and there.

A conversation is in progress.

> "Gas bladders?!" The dragon takes umbrage. "R-r-ridiculous. Bladders are for fire. Nothing more. It's the wings that do all the work!" The DRAGON attempts a serious demonstration but winces in pain under the effort. "Ow. Blast. In any event they most definitely *used* to do the work, I can tell you. *Harrumph.*" He thinks seriously for a moment. "I should like to have seen your model. Hold up." He sniffs the air. "Company." Sniffs again. "And ugly, too, by the waft of him."

ANAXIMANDER buzzes erratically and unseen, chased by birds across the B.G. He's getting 'warmer'.

SHREK, LITTLE URCHIN & DONKEY arrive on island.

RAVEN with cloth flies across B.G. - RAVEN is also getting 'warmer'.

SHREK, LITTLE URCHIN and DONKEY meet DRAGON and APPRENTICE MAGE.

APPRENTICE MAGE offers solution of a mock battle. DRAGON unhappy with option.

"Oh, bother!" The dragon folds his arms and coughs a little blue flame. "That is *not* the way one goes out." He coughs some more. "*Dragons don't die!* Father used to say. *They explode!*" The DRAGON sniffles with affliction. "What a fireball *he* was. Ah, me. Always *thought* I'd go out fighting. Bloody hell. Too sick and old now to make a proper job of it." Shakes his head. "No. This is all wrong. I'll not be seen in public like that. I'd be embarrassed. Lord knows *what* I'd do then. You can't make me."

APPRENTICE MAGE offers new solution of an arm-wrestling match with some 'Special Effects' to make it appear much more to the watching TOWNSPEOPLE lining the shore.

LITTLE URCHIN points out that the song says SHREK must *really* conquer the beast.

"But the song says ya' gotta *beat* 'im!"
"It doesn't say *how*, though." A.M. reminds.

A.M. gathers a sack of supplies and ascends the mountain assisted by the DONKEY.

SHREK and the DRAGON face each other across a great flat boulder. The arm-wrestling match begins. SHREK wins easily. Crowd on shore impressed by A.M.'s ambiguous pyrotechnic spectacle.

"There." SHREK folds his arms at LITTLE URCHIN. "I beat the Dragon."

LITTLE URCHIN not satisfied but able to admit its disappointing truth.

"Well, ..." L.U. becomes cynical. "It's obvious 'Hero' is just another word for 'Grownup'."

Song: *"GROWNUP ANGLES"* (duet with APPRENTICE MAGE)
(Math, the Universe and God song).

"Best two out of three?" The DRAGON flexes his sore arm. "I almost had you there, you know."

SHREK and DRAGON vie again just for the heck of it and again SHREK triumphs.

"Ow! Ow! Ow!" The DRAGON cedes once more. "The wings! The wings! Watch the wings!"

A.M.'s mock battle on the mountain-top is a big success.

All but SHREK sleep afterward in cave slightly affected by the fumes from the DRAGON's TONIC.

SHREK walks away from snoring cave unaffected and unable to sleep.

He comes across the RAVEN with the cloth caught in a thorn bush. SHREK frees it and the frightened bird flies away with its token.

SHREK finds a spot and lies down, watching stars. He falls asleep.

RAVEN watches from afar and then lands in the tree over SHREK's sleeping head. RAVEN contemplates the thing that had set him free. RAVEN drops remains of tattered cloth on SHREK's face.

SHREK has a nightmare about love, acceptance and responsibility.

End Act II

ACT III

In the morning, SHREK wakes early and thinks to leave on his own. He is mostly confused by everything that has happened.

He looks on the tattered cloth and thinks he sees a pair of lovely eyes in their smudges and wrinkles.

PRINCESS' RAVEN flaps around SHREK's head excitedly and flies a short distance away, cawing. He decides to follow.

"Now they must feed me." SHREK grumbled and rubbed his growling stomach.

SHREK wades back to sleeping TOWNSPEOPLE encamped on shore and is standing in their midst when they awake joyfully around him.

"He *is* the one!" They cry. "He *is* the one!"

SHREK is paraded back to town. Food and drink distract him on the road from his thoughts of the PRINCESS.

RAVEN fears to approach so large and agitated a crowd but keeps pace with its movement and an eye on SHREK.

ROYAL MAGE is slouched comfortably in the FESTIVAL THRONE amid a small armed complement of Royal Guards. They are helping themselves to the PRINCESS' birthday offerings.

ROYAL MAGE orders SHREK's arrest in the name of the KING. R.M. has seen SHREK's potential in a crystal ball (in one of many locked tower rooms) and seeks to control it with force.